High speed trains in Andhra Pradesh

543. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are making any efforts to cut down travel time by introducing fastest trains to some destinations to some States; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the present status thereof, State-wise, especially in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) The fastest train running over Indian Railways, at present, is 2001/2002 New Delhi-Bhopal Shatabdi Express which attains a maximumd speed of 150 kilometre per hour between Tughlakabad and Agra only. However, introduction of passenger carrying trains including superfast trains is an ongoing process over Indian Railways subject to availability of resources, requisite infrastructure and operational feasibility irrespective of geographical boundaries. During the current financial year 2006-07, 40 superfast trains have been introduced so far over Indian Railways, out of which 8 superfast trains will also serve Andhra Pradesh.

Expansion plan in cooperation with Chinese Railways

544. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways propose to embark on expansion plan in cooperation with the Chinese Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) how far the backward regions of India *i.e.* Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, etc. would be benefited under this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.